

Plurals . . .

688.1

Nouns Ending in y

The plurals of common nouns that end in *y* with a consonant letter just before the *y* are formed by changing the *y* to *i* and adding *es*.

fly — **flies** baby — **babies** cavity — **cavities**

The plurals of common nouns that end in *y* with a vowel before the *y* are formed by adding only *s*.

key — **keys** holiday — **holidays** attorney — **attorneys**

The plurals of proper nouns ending in *y* are formed by adding *s*.

There are three Circuit Citys in our metro area.

688.2

Compound Nouns

The plurals of some compound nouns are formed by adding *s* or *es* to the main word in the compound.

brothers-in-law maids of honor secretaries of state

688.3

Plurals That Do Not Change

The plurals of some words are the same in singular and plural form.

deer sheep trout aircraft

688.4

Irregular Spelling

Some words (including many foreign words) form a plural by taking on an irregular spelling; others are now acceptable with the commonly used *s* or *es* ending.

child — **children** woman — **women** man — **men**

goose — **geese** mouse — **mice** ox — **oxen**

tooth — **teeth** octopus — **octopuses** or **octopi**

index — **indexes** or **indices**

688.5

Adding an 's

The plurals of letters, figures, symbols, and words discussed as words are sometimes formed by adding an apostrophe and an *s*.

Dr. Walters has two Ph.D.'s.

My dad's license plate has three 2's between two B's.

You've got too many but's and so's in that sentence.

For information on forming plural possessives, see **666.1**.

Grammar Practice

Plurals 2

- Nouns Ending in y
- Compound Nouns
- Plurals That Do Not Change
- Irregular Spelling
- Adding an 's



For each of the following sentences, write the correct form of any underlined plural that is not correct. If an underlined plural is correct, write "C."

Example: Aaron's mother said one of her sister-in-laws worked in a circus for three years.

sisters-in-law

1. The circus announcer shouted out, "Ladys and gentlemen, welcome to the finest show on earth!"
2. For the next five days, people entered the Fair Wing Circus Grounds through several archwaies set up near the roads.
3. Flags full of Fs and Ws flew above the tents.
4. Elaine expected to see elephants, but she did not expect to see mooses!
5. Faleena wondered if there were many mouses running around the circus grounds that might scare the elephants.
6. When a little girl saw the lion's sharp tooths, she started to cry.
7. The three clowns with donkies were so funny!
8. We could see the acrobats doing their warm-ups before climbing the ladder.
9. After the evening's performance, both Jane and Camille wrote in their diarys.